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QUASAR™

THE FIGHT FOR THE TITLE...

...AND THE WINNER TAKES THE UNIVERSE!

30TH ANNIVERSARY 1962 1992

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

WENDELL VAUGHN. . . THE FIRST EARTH MAN EVER APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. BONDED TO THE ENERGY-TRANSFORMING QUANTUM-BANDS THAT ARE BOTH WEAPONS AND SYMBOLS OF HIS STATION, HE FIGHTS AN ONGOING BATTLE TO DEFEND ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE FROM COSMIC EVIL!

Stan Lee presents

QUASAR

SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE REALITY WE KNOW IS THE **WHITE ROOM**, THE INFINITE CHAMBER WHERE ALL THE PAST PROTECTORS OF THE UNIVERSE SIT FOR ETERNITY, UNABLE TO MOVE.

RECENTLY QUASAR, THE CURRENT PROTECTOR, MATERIALIZED HERE, EVIDENTLY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF HAVING ACTIVATED THE **ULTIMATE NULLIFIER**.*

HIS EFFORTS TO FREE HIMSELF PROVED **FUTILE**. HIS ONLY HOPE SEEMED TO BE IN THE FORM OF A SWORD-WIELDING **ANGELIC MANIFESTATION**, PROMISING HIM SALVATION.

BUT THEN A FIGURE CLAD IN **QUANTUM ARMOR** BURST IN AND BLASTED THE ANGEL TO **ATOMS!**

I'M THE *NEW* PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE, QUAZE--

--AND YOU-- YOU'RE GONNA STAY *DEAD*--

--EVEN IF I HAVE TA KILL YOU AGAIN *MYSELF!*

*IN INFINITY WAR #4. --MIKE

MARK GRUENWALD STORY • ANDY SMITH PENCILS • RALPH CABRERA INKS • JANICE CHIANG LETTERS
PAUL BECTON COLORS • MIKE ROCKWITZ EDITS • RALPH MACCHIO GROUP EDITS • TOM DEFALCO HUGE EDITS

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THE SAVAGE SWORD OF SALVATION

WAIT--YOU--!

FWOOM

I *DID* IT! BLASTED HIM INTO A PILE OF *QUANTUM GLOP!*

THANOS IS GONNA BE PRETTY DARN PROUD OF ME FOR HOW I TOOK CARE OF *HIM!*

WOULDN'T WANT QUASAR TO COME BACK AND CLAIM HIS *OLD JOB.* I'M DOING IT NOW--ME, THE *BLUE MARVEL!*

HEY, THE *SWORD* THAT WINGED GUY WAS HOLDING IS STILL *FLOATING* HERE.

LET ME *SEE* THAT THING.

YEOOW! GAVE OFF SOME KIND OF *SHOCK* WHEN I TRIED TO TOUCH IT!

MUST HAVE SOME KINDA *FORCE FIELD* AROUND IT.

MAYBE ONE OF THESE *CHAIR JOCKEYS* KNOWS WHAT'S ITS STORY.

YOU--ANSWER ME OR I'LL *ATOMIZE YOU* LIKE YOU JUST SAW ME DO TO THOSE *LAST TWO.*

WHAT'S WITH THAT *SWORD?*

ASK *HIM.*

ASK *WHO?*

ME!

WHAT THE--?!? IT *CAN'T* BE! I BLEW YOU TO *SMITHEREENS!*

I'M AS SURPRISED AS *YOU* ARE, *BAZOOKA JOE!*

YOU *MOCK* ME?

WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING BUT THAT *PUNY PIGSTICKER--?!?*

SHVING

LOOKS LIKE IT'S ALL I NEED TO BLOCK YOUR *BLASTS!*

WHOAAAAAAA--!

RIIIIIIP

JUST WHEN IT GETS *INTERESTING*, IT PASSES FROM MY *FIELD OF VISION.*

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S *HAPPENING* TO ME--

--HOW I *RE-FORMED* MY BODY AFTER HE SLAGGED IT--HOW COME I'M SUDDENLY ABLE TO MOVE FROM THE *CHAIR*--OR HOW I SEEM TO HAVE SUPER-POWER WITHOUT MY *QUANTUM-BANDS*--

--ALL I KNOW IS *I FEEL GREAT* FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WHO KNOWS HOW LONG!

BLUE MARVEL LOOK OUT! YOU'RE ABOUT TO HAVE ONE *HECK* OF A FIGHT ON YOUR HANDS!

HE WENT THROUGH THIS *RENT* IN THIS CURTAIN!

SO LONG, *WHITE ROOMERS!*

QUASAR ESCAPES! BUT THAT'S--*NOT FAIR!* THE WHITE ROOM IS OUR PLACE OF *ETERNAL PUNISHMENT!*

IS AS *I* SAID. THIS *PURGATORY.* QUASAR GOES FIGHT *FINAL BATTLE.* WILL DETERMINE IF HE HEREAFTER *BLESSED OR CURSED!*

MEANWHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GALAXY, TWO WOMEN OF EARTH STAND ON AN ALIEN WORLD...

SO SILENT... IT'S EERIE.

DON'T YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED, KAYLA? YOU'VE DRIVEN OFF THE ENTIRE FLEET OF SPACE INVADERS--BLEW THEM AWAY WITH THE POWER OF THAT STAR TATTOO BEHIND YOUR EAR!

I...

I GUESS I DID, DIDN'T I? THE CHIEF EXAMINER WAS RIGHT-- I AM POWERFUL.

OH, HOLLY! IF ONLY I'D FIGURED OUT HOW TO USE THIS STUPID POWER SOONER, I MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVE COUNTLESS LIVES--

--MAYBE MILLIONS OF SCADAMITES WHO LIE DEAD AND DYING FROM THOSE HORRIBLE ALIENS' DEATH-RAYS.

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF, KAYLA! HOW WERE YOU SUPPOSED TO KNOW HOW TO USE THE TATTOO, WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW IT GOT THERE!

OH, WOW! I-- PRESSED AGAINST IT WITH MY PALM--AND IT MOVED! IT'S ON MY HAND NOW!

MAYBE WE CAN USE YOUR POWER TO FIND A WAY OFF THIS DECIMATED MUD BALL!

I'LL TAKE US TO A CITY OR SOMETHING-- MAYBE WE CAN FIND A SPACESHIP OR SOMETHING!

YOU'RE SURE YOU DON'T HAVE THE *SLIGHTEST IDEA* HOW YOU *GOT* THAT POWER?

I CAN'T *IMAGINE*... UNLESS...

UNLESS *WHAT*?

WELL... EVER HEAR OF THAT NEW AVENGER, *QUASAR*?

YES.

I *KNOW* HIM PRETTY WELL. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE THAT *HE* SOMEHOW *GAVE* THIS POWER TO ME.

WHEW!

AND...

HERE'S A *CITY*. AND IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT WAS *TOUCHED* BY THE SPACE INVADERS!

MAYBE THERE'S SOMEBODY *ALIVE* HERE--SOMEBODY WHO CAN *HELP US*.

I'M KEEPING *MY* FINGERS CROSSED.

ELSEWHERE ON THE PLANET IS ANOTHER WOMAN ONCE OF EARTH, A WOMAN NAMED KISMET WHO IS ALSO A BEING OF POWER...

AT THE MOMENT, SHE SITS RECUPERATING FROM A WOUND SUSTAINED IN BATTLE WITH THE ALIEN FLEET, TOTALLY OBLIVIOUS TO THE PRESENCE OF THE OTHER TWO...

BIZARRE. FIRST THAT INTENSE BURST OF *WHITE LIGHT*--

--AND NOW THE WHINE OF *ALIEN DISINTEGRATION RAYS* STRAFING THE ATMOSPHERE CANNOT BE HEARD.

WHAT HAS *HAPPENED*? HAVE THE INVADERS *FINISHED* THEIR GRISLY WORK AND GONE?

OR DID SOMETHING *DRIVE THEM AWAY*?

MY *SHOULDER WOUND* HAS ALMOST HEALED. I BELIEVE I AM FIT TO *FLY*.

I WILL *SOLVE* THIS MYSTERY.

YES... I AM *HEALED.*

ONCE MORE FREE TO HARNESS THE *COSMIC ENERGY* THAT PULSATES THROUGH MY CELLULAR STRUCTURE.

STILL NO SIGN OF THE *INVADERS.* THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE HAD BEEN *FULL* OF THEM.

HAS SOMEONE COME TO THIS BELEAGUERED WORLD'S *RESCUE* AND DONE WHAT *I* COULD NOT?

WHAT KIND OF *POWER* COULD HAVE REPULSED A *THOUSAND-SHIP SPACE ARMADA?*

NOT A *SHIP* IN SIGHT, INVADER OR *OTHERWISE.* I WILL *ORBIT* THIS SPHERE. PERHAPS ON THE PLANET'S FAR SIDE....!

NOTHING. NO SIGN OF *ACTIVITY.*

FURTHER... I CANNOT SENSE THE STARSHIP OF *THE MOURNERS* THAT BROUGHT ME TO THIS SITE.

EVEN THOUGH ITS *CLOAKING SHIELD* WAS UP WHEN I LEFT IT, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SENSE ITS DISTINCTIVE *DISTORTION* OF THE LOCAL BACKGROUND RADIATION.

HAVE THE MOURNERS FINISHED THEIR *MORBID TASK* AND *ABANDONED* ME--

--OR HAVE THEY TOO BEEN *OBLITERATED* BY WHATEVER STRUCK THE INVADERS?!?

OUTSIDE THE WHITE ROOM...

I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO *COME BACK* IN TO *GET* YOU, QUAZE!

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, MARV--ONLY *FOOLS* RUSH IN! NOW WHY DON'T WE *CHILL* A BIT AND--

CHILL THIS!

BOOM

WHOA--

KNOW SOMETHING, MARV--

--YOU'RE A *DISGRACE* TO THOSE QUANTUM-BANDS!

YEOW! MY Q-BLASTS RICOCHETED OFF THAT CRAZY *SWORD* OF HIS! IF I HADN'T WHIPPED UP THIS *SHIELD*--

OKAY, WISE GUY, YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH *SWORDS*--

--I'LL BE HAPPY TO *OBLIGE!*

YOU GOT ME *WRONG*, MARVEL, I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT AT ALL-- YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S *TESTOSTERONE*-ADDLED!

ARRRR!

SPANNG

NYAAA!

AOWWW!

THIS SWORD IS--INCREDIBLE! STRONGER THAN HIS QUANTUM-POWER?!?

OR IS HE JUST SLOPPY ABOUT HOW HE MANIFESTS IT?

LOOK, MARVEL, I DON'T WANT TO BEAT YOU-- ALL I WANT IS INFORMATION.

WHERE ARE WE? HOW'D YOU GET HERE? WHAT--

SHUT UP!

I'M BUSY SWORDING THINGS OUT!

THWACK

THWA

THW

OKAY, MARV--*NO MORE FUNNY STUFF!* WHATEVER YOU THROW AT ME I CAN *BLOW THROUGH!* BELIEVE IT!

NOW LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT AWFUL *GET-UP* OF YOURS!

THWICK

THWISH

THWOO

HEY--

YOUR GET-UP HAS *GOTTEN UP AND LEFT.*

HEH HEH. NICE. DIDN'T EVEN *SCRATCH* ME.

OKAY, NOW-- *TALK*. WHERE IS *HERE*? HOW DID YOU KNOW TO *FIND* ME HERE?

OKAY, WELL, YOU SEE-- MY *BOSS*--

WHO'S YOUR BOSS-- *THANOS*?

THAT'S *RIGHT*. YOU DESERVE A **BIG HAND!**

WHHMP

GOT HIM!

GOT HIM **GOOD!**

YES! *SMUSHED*-- LIKE A *BUG*!

THE VICINITY OF THE PLANET SCADAM...

WEAVE A DELICATE ENERGY MESH... PROJECT IT IN ALL DIRECTIONS...

...USE IT TO CATCH STRAY PARTICLES... PERHAPS I CAN DETERMINE IF THE FLEET WAS DISINTEGRATED OR SIMPLY...

BEHIND ME--?

THE MOURNERS' CATHEDRAL-SHIP!

THEN THEY WEREN'T BLOWN AWAY!

AND...

HEY THERE, KIZZY.

MAKKARI.

WHAT THE HECK DID YOU DO? THE SHOCK WAVE BLASTED THE BLACK FLEET CLEAR OUT OF THE STAR SYSTEM.

WE BARELY MADE IT INTO WARP SPACE IN TIME!

I DID NOTHING. IT WASN'T ME.

WHAAAT? THEN WHAT DID?

SOMETHING DOWN THERE.

BELOW...

IT'S AWFUL. DEVASTATION WHEREVER WE GO.

I SHOULD HAVE--

STOP THAT, KAYLA!

YOU DID WHAT YOU COULD AS SOON AS YOU COULD DO IT!

I KNOW... I JUST-- I NEVER ASKED FOR THIS POWER, THIS RESPONSIBILITY...

LOOK! DOWN THERE!

MY LORD!

IT'S JUST LIKE THAT DOORWAY THE CHIEF EXAMINER USED TO ABDUCT US HERE! IT MAY BE OUR WAY BACK TO EARTH!

BUT WHAT IF IT'S NOT? WHAT IF IT LEADS SOMEWHERE ELSE-- SOMEPLACE WHERE WE'D DIE THE MOMENT WE GOT THERE!

IF YOU DIED, YOU COULD JUST PULL YOURSELF BACK TOGETHER AGAIN! YOU SHOULD TAKE IT, KAYLA. IF IT LEADS TO EARTH, YOU COULD COME BACK FOR ME!

NO, HOLLY. IT MAY NOT BE A TWO-WAY DOOR. I COULD STEP THROUGH, FIND EARTH, AND FIND THE DOOR CLOSED FROM THE OTHER SIDE!

I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND!

I DON'T WANT US TO GET SPLIT UP.

THERE'S GOT TO BE A BETTER WAY BACK HOME.

OUTSIDE THE WHITE ROOM...

HUH? WAIT--

I THOUGHT I *CRUSHED* YOU!

YOU *DID.*

BUT I GOT *BETTER.*

NOW I'M GONNA GIVE YOU THE *CLOSEST SHAVE* OF YOUR LIFE IF YOU DON'T START *TELLING ME* WHAT I WANT TO--

VNUUM

BLAST!

HE *QUANTUM-JUMPED!*

YOU CAN *FOLLOW* HIM. ALL YOU MUST DO IS *TRY!*

WHAT?

THE--*ANGEL* OF VENGEANCE--?!?

BUT *HOW* AM I SUPPOSED TO--

I DON'T HAVE MY *QUANTUM-BANDS!*

I--

WHAT IN THE--? *MY WRIST!*

VWOOM

THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE SHOOTING *DUCKS* IN A BARREL! QUASAR WITHOUT HIS Q-BANDS--*POWERLESS!*

GOT TO TALK TO *THANOS*. MAYBE HE'LL KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO *QUASAR*--WHY HE'S SO--

THAT FLASH OF *LIGHT*?

DON'T TELL ME--

YIIIKES!

DON'T TELL *ME* WHAT I *CAN* OR *CANNOT* DO, PAL! I'M THE *NEW PROTECTOR* YOU'RE *WASHED UP!* YESTERDAY'S *NEWS!*

LET ME *SHOW* YOU HOW TO USE THAT FLAMING *PIG-STICKER!*

WhoufF!

YOU CAN *RUN*, MARVY--

--BUT YOU SURE CAN'T--

HA-HAH! I *FIGURED* IT OUT--THE ONLY WAY TO BEAT YOU IS WITH YOUR COCKAMAMIE *SWORD!*

IS THAT *SO?*

NNNNNHG!

PWUNK

BLUE MARVEL? YOU STILL *AWAKE?*

NO?

GOOD. I'D HATE TO HAVE TO *REALLY* HURT YOU.

AND NOW--

--LET ME BORROW THOSE ERSATZ *QUANTUM-BANDS* OF YOURS A MOMENT--!

THE STARSHIP MOURNING STAR...

I INTEND TO GO BACK DOWN TO SCADAM AND DETERMINE WHAT POWER COULD HAVE REPULSED THE BLACK FLEET.

DO YOU WISH TO ACCOMPANY ME?

UM, IT'S LIKE THIS, KIZZ...

WHILE YOU WERE OUT PLAYING HERO, I GOT TO TALKING WITH ONE OF THE MOURNERS AND HE--I THINK IT WAS A HE--TOLD ME ABOUT THIS ALIEN SPECIES HE ENCOUNTERED...

...WHERE EVERY-ONE MOVES CLOSE TO THE SPEED OF LIGHT, ALL THE TIME! HE EVEN TOLD ME HOW TO GET THERE FROM HERE.

WHAT IS SO INTERESTING ABOUT THAT?

I'M HOPING THEY CAN TEACH ME THEIR TECHNIQUE! THEN I COULD ENTER THE GALACTIC MARA-THON I ONCE FAILED TO QUALIFY FOR!.*

*BACK IN ISSUE #17. --MIKE

ACCOMPANY ME TO THE PLANET BELOW, HELP ME DISCOVER ITS HIDDEN POWER, THEN I WILL TAKE YOU TO--

BUT WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT WILL TAKE?

I'M...MORE THAN A BIT ANXIOUS TO GET STARTED ON MY QUEST FOR ULTIMATE SPEED.

THEN IT SEEMS THIS IS WHERE WE PART COMPANY, MAKKARI.

AW, KIZZY, CAN'T WE EVEN SAY A FRIENDLY GOODBYE TO EACH OTHER?

WHAT'S SO INTERESTING?!? KIZZY, I LIVE MY LIFE FOR SPEED!

THE WHITE ROOM...

HEY, EVERYBODY--I'M **BACK**, AND IN CASE YOU'RE INTERESTED, **I'VE WON!**

WON'T BE NEEDING THIS **SWORD** ANYMORE.

THUNK

THERE YOU GO, MARV. HOPE **YOU** ENJOY SITTING THERE AS MUCH AS **I** DID.

FOLKS, I STILL DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS **PLACE** AND WHY **YOU'RE** ALL HERE... ALL I KNOW IS **I'M** NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.

AND WITH **MY** CHAIR FILLED, THERE'S NO **PLACE** FOR ME HERE.

HOW DID YOU **BEST HIM** WITHOUT YOUR **QUANTUM-BANDS?** HOW DID YOU **RESURRECT** YOURSELF AFTER HE DISINTEGRATED YOU?

THAT HAD **ME** CONFUSED FOR A TIME, TOO, ANDWELLA...

MONTHS AGO I WAS STRANDED IN ANOTHER DIMENSION SO FAR OFF THE BEATEN TRACK THAT MY QUANTUM-BANDS DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH JUICE TO GET ME BACK HOME.*

I ENCOUNTERED THIS GUY THERE WHO HAD THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE ENTIRE DIMENSION-- THE STARBRAND-- AND I MANAGED TO PERSUADE HIM TO GIVE IT TO ME.

I USED THIS STARBRAND TO WARP ME BACK TO HOME, AND SINCE I COULDN'T SEE IT ANYWHERE OR FEEL ITS POWER:--

*BACK IN OFFBEAT ISSUE #31. -- mike

--I FIGURED THAT IT MUST HAVE BURNED ITSELF OUT TAKING ME HOME.

WELL, IT DIDN'T-- AT LEAST NOT COMPLETELY! I STILL HAD THE IMPRINT OF THE STARBRAND UNDERNEATH MY QUANTUM-BANDS ALL ALONG--

--I JUST COULDN'T TELL UNTIL I GOT SEPARATED FROM MY Q-BANDS, THANKS TO A JERK NAMED THE MAGUS.*

*ISSUE #40.

IT'S THE STARBRAND THEN THAT REASSEMBLED YOU WHEN THE RENEGADE DISINTEGRATED YOU?

GUESS SO.

NOW BEFORE I TRY TO USE THE POWER TO GET OUT OF HERE, I'D APPRECIATE SOME ANSWERS...

YES?

THIS ROOM--TELL ME THE TRUTH, WHAT IS IT?

THIS PLACE IS A PART OF ME... THE BODIES YOU SEE HERE ARE COMPOSED OF MY BODY...

...THE SPIRITS THAT ANIMATE THESE BODIES ARE RESIDUES OF THE LIFE ESSENCE EACH OF THESE BEINGS LEFT IN THE QUANTUM-BANDS WHEN S/HE EMPLOYED THEM.

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE?

I WISHED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOU, MY LAST CHAMPION.

WHY'D YOU MESS WITH MY HEAD-- SEND ALL THOSE WEIRD MANIFESTATIONS...?

WELL... OKAY, I FORGIVE YOU.

YOU ARE DEAD, AFTER ALL... AND THAT CAN'T BE ALL THAT FUN.

OKAY, PAST PROTECTORS OF THE UNIVERSE--

OR REASONABLE FACSIMILES THEREOF--

--TILL WE MEET AGAIN!

YES!

I'M OUT OF THE EONVERSE, BACK IN REAL LIVE OUTER SPACE!

I'VE GOT MY PHYSICAL BODY BACK-- AND IT FEELS GREAT!

I WONDER... WAS I EVER ACTUALLY NULLIFIED BY GALACTUS'S WEAPON-- OR WAS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME JUST A TRICK OF THE MAGUS JUST TO GET RID OF ME...?

WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MAGUS, ANYWAY?*

*YOU DON'T IF YOU CAUGHT INFINITY WAR #6.
--MINDFUL MIKE

FEELS WEIRD TO BE FLYING WITHOUT MY BANDS. SURE WISH I KNEW WHERE THEY ARE!

AS A MATTER OF FACT... SURE WISH I KNEW WHERE I WAS!

EARTH.

MORE SPECIFICALLY, SOMEWHERE IN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

THAT TEARS IT! I'VE HAD IT WITH THAT BELCHING GREASEBALL!

I'M GONNA GO OVER THERE AND TELL THE LEATHER BOY WHAT I THINK. YOU WITH ME, NED?

SURE, FRED. ALL THE WAY!

HEYA, GOLDILOCKS. ME AN' MY FRIEND HERE DON'T LIKE THE SOUNDS AND SMELLS THAT'VE BEEN COMIN' OUTTA YOU!

YEAH, SOMEONE WHO DON'T KNOW HOW TA BEHAVE IN PUBLIC SHOULDN'T BE TAKIN' UP VALUABLE SPACE AT OUR FAV'RITE BAR!

BDUM BDUM

Nnnn... WHAT WUZZAT?

D-DUNNO--!

SLURRRP

BARP!

CONTINUED!

QUORUM

MIKE ROCKWITZ: EDITOR BARRY DUTTER: ASSISTANT EDITOR

To the Crew of Q, and I do mean you,

Y'know, for a long time, whenever I thought of "cosmic Marvel," I thought of the Silver Surfer. Well, that era is past. The most ultimately cosmic character with his own title is by far Quasar! Issue #37 was the total clincher. It shows a well thought-out, evidently quite planned storyline and explanation for why cosmic entities have need for bodies. Very, very good.

Her should change her name, no doubt about it. Perhaps back to Paragon, though I would prefer she call herself J'ridia Starduster as she did in ALPHA FLIGHT #97-100. She should also be less puppy-doggish about Quasar--she reminds me of a schoolgirl with a crush.

I just had a frightening thought. In the New Universe crossover, the guy with the Starbrand talked about floating in his sleep and being the most powerful paranormal in the universe. Now Kayla was floating in her sleep and is told by the Chief Examiner she's the most powerful superhuman he's encountered. Oh, man, don't tell me Kayla sucked up the Starbrand! (It's okay if it happens, just don't tell me!)

One thing, though, Mark...Quasar should cut down on calling everybody by a cute nickname. It works on occasion, but "Nomy" and "Conty" were just blee-yarrgh, you know? It makes it look like Quasar doesn't take his opponents seriously enough.

Until Her, Moondragon, and Kayla are the bachelorettes on "The Dating Game" with Quasar as the contestant, make mine Marvel!

Dave South
(Address withheld by request)
Kirksville, MD

You got it, Dave.

Dear Marvel,

I was regarding the cover of QUASAR #37 when I figured out where I've seen the basis for the way Greg Capullo depicts the Anomaly. It is a variation on the figure of the strange spiny caterpillar-like creature that is one of the fossils on the Burgess Shale, the 570 million year old stone that preserves the impressions of soft-bodied organisms so physiologically different from those creatures (like us) who evolved from different organisms that they practically constitute alien life forms. It is fitting that the most bizarre creature that the fossil record has preserved for us be the model for the most bizarre cosmic entity. Whose idea was it--Capulo's or Gruenwald's?

And speaking of bizarre, the Manifestors are the kind of thing I wish would happen more often in comics and books: explanations for the mysteries of the universe which make the universe *more* not less mysterious. Where did the Manifestors come from? How did they hit upon their way of making a living? How many cosmic entities are there for a whole species to succeed in giving them form? Do the Manifestors service the universe, the multiverse, or the whole omniverse? Every answer raises a thousand questions, just like in physics or mathematics today. As every scientist has learned, it's not the answers that make the world fascinating, it's the questions.

Another extremely interesting job, deserving of congratulations. Your efforts are appreciated.

Daniel H. Bigelow
(Address withheld by request)
Republic, WA 99166

Congrats on identifying Mark's visual inspiration for Anomaly, Daniel. Other readers who recognized *Hallucigenia* from the Burgess Shale include Erin Schram of Portsmouth, OH and Cliff Maxwell of Houston, TX!

Dear Editor,

"Infinity Manifestations" in QUASAR #37 was one of three best stories I read all year. Not only did it deal with the largest loose end from the Soul-Eater story (the space fetus), it set the stage for the upcoming INFINITY WAR crossovers. The best things about the story were the two events that led to significant revelations about the Marvel Universe and some of its denizens.

First, there was the Contemplator, and his revelation that someone was imitating him. This development is clearly meant to explain why the Contemplator seemed to have experienced a major personality change between his second encounter with Captain America and "his" first appearance in SILVER SURFER. Presumably it was this impostor who took part in the Elders' plot to kill Galactus, whose body was mostly consumed by Reptyl, and who was driven insane by the Cotati when he attempted to take over the Kree Empire.

Second, there was Quasar's and the Contemplator's visit to the Dimension of Manifestations and the information about the abstract beings they learned there. Although I once wrote a letter (printed in DR. STRANGE #61) asking how conceptual entities who appeared to be humanoid when dealing with human beings would be perceived by non-humanoids, I never gave any thought to exactly how abstract beings manifested themselves in the physical world. Mark Gruenwald not only thought about it, he came up with a terrific idea to explain it. The introduction of the race of living fractals who serve as manifestation-bodies for the abstract beings (and certain powerful physical beings) was great, as was Anthropomorpho's revelation that the appearance of a particular M-body varies depending on the skill of the Manifestor, the requirements of the entity being represented, and the mental image of the beholder. This explains why some of the cosmic beings who appeared in INFINITY GAUNTLET and the trial of Adam Warlock looked quite different than they had in previous appearances. The idea that their dimension contains reflections of every manifestation the fractals have ever done is interesting, but the fact that the M-bodies reacted to Quasar was a bit confusing.

Aside from these revelations, QUASAR #37 contained a number of interesting developments, beginning with the unborn alien life form being a "nascent cosmic-class entity." Although we've seen a number of mortals who have gained cosmic powers, I think this is the first case of a being who is destined to be cosmic even before birth. Issue #37 also featured the first appearance of the Caregiver, a female Elder who cares for living things. Out of the thirteen Elders seen so far, she is only the third female, and the first Elder shown to have devoted her life to a single pursuit. However, I was disappointed by the fact that she was humanoid like the other twelve Elders. After Eon's revelation in issue #17 that there were at least a *thousand* Elders, I was hoping the vast majority would be non- or semi-humanoid.

Donald Campbell
70 Devon Road
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Thanks for the analysis, Donald. And sorry we had to trim your massive missive. Now, so we don't let all this praise go to our heads...

Dear Kelly and Mark,

I find myself ambivalent about comics like QUASAR #37. On one hand, I enjoy the delvings into the inner workings of the Marvel Universe as in this issue, but on the other, I don't think these kinds of stories are likely to help this book stay afloat. They appeal to a group of readers with a wide knowledge of the M.U. and a deep interest in its scope and (to use a much-maligned word) continuity. There may be more such readers than ten years ago, but they are still a small minority of the potential audience.

Maybe Quasar should return to Earth, both literally and figuratively, for a while. No more abstract entities or cosmic battles. Develop the supporting cast (we never did get an explanation for the new H.D. Steckley), have a few reasonably mundane guest stars or crossovers (Nick Fury is a natural since AIM presumably is still after the quantum bands). Maybe then you can build a base of support for this title.

Bradford R. Poston
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Thanks for your concern, Bradford. And as a matter of fact, we will be alternating between space- and Earth-based stories for the months to come. It is our hope that what we're doing in this book has enough of the requisite rock'em-sock'em action that readers will forgive our occasional forays into abstraction. Sales have been pretty good of late, so we must be doing something right!